

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for withdrawal of the objections to the specification and claim 4.

Claims 1 to 16 are currently active in the application. By the present amendment, claims 1, 3–5 and 7 have been amended in order to emphasize the distinguishable features of the present invention. The support for the current amendment can be found at least in Figure 1 and pages 7 and 8 of the specification. Additionally, new claims 13–16 have been added for the Examiner's consideration. The support for the new claims can be found in at least Figure 18 and page 18 lines 5 to 27 of the specification. No new matter has been introduced by this amendment. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application.

Claims 1 to 8, 11 and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chanod et al. (U.S. Patent 6,622,123) in view of Lissauer et al. (U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0135358A1). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the reason that the combination of references relied on by the Examiner fails to show or suggest the claimed invention.

The present invention provides a multilingual conversation assist system which is used for supporting a conversation between users of a plurality of different languages. Constructively, the claimed system comprises a database storing a common conception of all available languages, data used for conversations for each included language, and plurality of subdatabases which provides setting of a conversational situation and storing and displaying language units corresponding to the selected conversation situation and languages. The number of subdatabases is equal to a number of combinations of available languages used as first and second languages. Language units, used by the claimed system, can include a combination of character expression in a first language, a character expression in a second language, a corresponding image display, a phonetic expression of a pronunciation in the second language with phonetic

symbols in the first language, and a voice representation in the second language.

The Examiner stated in the Office Action that the patent to Chanod teaches all limitations of the claimed system except for displaying the language units using multimedia. The Examiner relies on Patent Publication to Lissauer et al. as showing this feature. The Applicant respectfully disagrees and point out to the Examiner that the combination of Chanod et al. and Lissauer et al. cannot create the present invention.

The patent to Chanod et al. shows an interactive translation system that utilizes a collection of predefined core sentences in a source language, that may be initially accessed through a thematic hierarchy or through key words. Chanod et al. teaches that new sentences may be recursively elaborated through transformations of a selected core sentences, that comprise substitution and expansion of syntactic modifications. As it was emphasized previously, the patent to Chanod et al. is more related to generation of an accurate translation of a preselected sentence from the one language to another than to the assisting to an active conversation as the present invention does.

The Examiner further relies on patent to Lissauer et al. as showing the usage of multimedia. The reference to Lissauer et al. discloses a multi-language phrase editor for making a database stored in a PC readable for different languages in a runtime application environment. Mainly, Lissauer et al. aims to create a multi-language database which allows the design of software applications anywhere where a language translation may be required. Additionally, the system can be used with a computer as a multilingual phrase database in a runtime application environment for translating words, phrases, and variables into other languages. A schematic diagram showing how system is created is presented in Figure 3 in Lissauer et al. Figure 3 shows that the creation of common phrases is made with separate databases being connected for use specifically with individual applications so that the respective databases can be merged and used by the different applications and thereby eliminate redundancy in the creation of applications.

It should be noted, that the system proposed by Lissauer et al. is not constructed to support conversations between speakers of different languages, which makes this reference irrelevant to the subject matter of the claimed invention. Since the primary purpose of the Lissauer et al. is to provide system supporting a design of software applications, this system constructively is very different from the claimed invention and, for that matter, the patent for Chanod et al. The Examiner particularly refers to paragraph 39 in the publication to Lissauer et al. as describing the features alleged to be identical the claimed invention. Specifically, this paragraph explains how graphic images are associated with phrases. It definitely has nothing to do with adding information for better understanding of a language unit. The Applicant respectfully points out that the graphic images of Lissauer et al. are not used as a means supporting assistance for a language unit used in a conversation as it is used by the claimed invention. Furthermore, Lissauer et al. in paragraph 39 states that, "The system does not store graphic images. It only stores the path and file name of the images." Similarly, the other multimedia options are not stored by the system, but presented in independent databases in Lissauer et al. In contrast, the present invention stores all graphic images within the claimed database. Lissauer et al. more oriented for passive language assistance in developing of software applications and does not have any support to assist a dynamic live conversation as the claimed system does. Since Lissauer et al. resolves an absolutely different problem, this system constructively is very different and depends on many databases constructed to be used with computer operating system supporting software. It should be specifically noted that Lissauer et al. does not show any structure for setting a conversational situation as claimed in claim 1 and therefore the combination with Chanod et al., which does not show conversation assistance also, cannot result to the claimed invention. The Examiner has taken rather diverse systems and tried to combine them based on Applicant's disclosure, but since no reference shows a conversation assistance, the reconstruction would not result in the claimed system. The rejection is clearly without merit and should therefore be withdrawn.

In order to emphasize the structural distinguishable features of the present invention, claim 1 has been amended. Specifically, claim 1 now recites, "A multilingual conversation assist system for assisting a conversation between users of a plurality of languages, comprising:

a control means prompting a user to select a conversational situation; and a database storing common conceptual information about at least two languages available for multilingual conversations and a plurality of subdatabases, one subdatabase for each of said at least two languages storing data available to a conversation, each of said subdatabases including an area for storing data for setting a conversational situation, a control section for storing a control program for said control means for reading the setting data of the conversation situation and displaying language units corresponding to the selected conversation situation, and an area for storing language units that are used for said at least two languages, ..." (emphasis added). As amended, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 clearly defines over the combination of Chanod et al. and Lissauer et al. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application in view of the present amendment.

Claims 9 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chanod et al. in view of Lissauer et al. and further in view of Applicant Admitted Prior Art. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The references to Chanod et al. and to Lissauer et al. have been distinguished above and it is shown that the combination of these two references fails to show the invention as presently claimed. The rejected claims 9 and 10 indirectly depend on the currently amended claim 1 and therefore are allowable. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of claims 9 and 10.

Additionally, by the present amendment new claims 13 to 16 have been added for the Examiner's consideration. As it was emphasized above the gist of the present invention resides in connecting a plurality of language units and displaying connected language units, as mentioned with reference to Figure 18 and

description on page 18, lines 10 to 25. As described and shown there, a language unit connection field 1196 is prepared in a second-stage option query 1190 so as to indicate whether or not next language unit is present. The new claim 13 is dependent on claim 1 and recites this feature. New independent claim 14 also recites this feature. New claims 15 and 16 are dependent on claim 14. Applicant believes that neither Chanod et al. nor Lissaure et al., or an combination thereof, would be directed to necessity of such a language unit connection field.

For the reasons advanced, it is submitted that claims 1 to 13 clearly define over the prior art relied on by the Examiner. The prior art cited but not relied on by the Examiner has been reviewed, but for the reasons already advanced, that prior art is similarly not relevant to the invention as now claimed.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered, that claims 1 to 16 be allowed, and that the application be passed to issue.

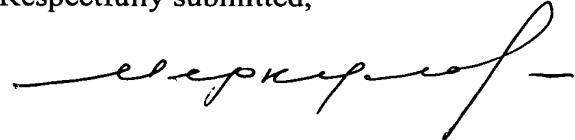
Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

Docket 00990083AA
Serial No.: 10/007,671

11

A provisional petition is hereby made for any extension of time necessary for the continued pendency during the life of this application. Please charge any fees for such provisional petition and any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-2041 (Whitham, Curtis & Christofferson, P.C.).

Respectfully submitted,



Olga V. Merkoulova
Reg. No. 48,757

Whitham, Curtis & Christofferson, P.C.
11491 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 340
Reston, VA 20190

Tel. (703) 787-9400
Fax. (703) 787-7557

Customer No.: 30 743